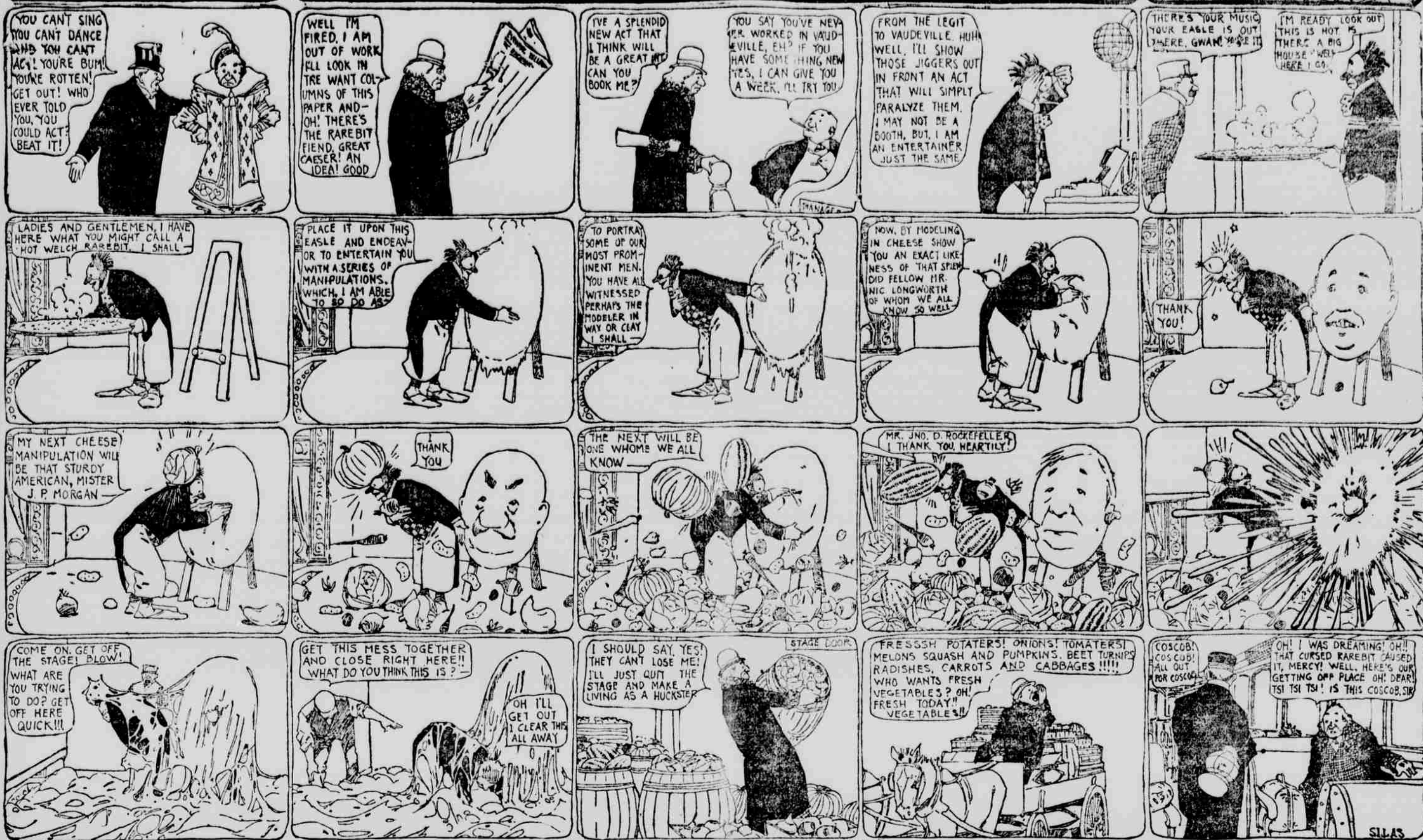




# DREAM OF THE RAREBIT FIEND



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## EARTH MYSTERIES.

Two remarkable phenomena have recently been the subjects of scientific investigation and discussion. Professor John Milne interested the members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at its recent meeting with an account of his experiments with an unexplained light emanating from a chalk pit near his house.

In dark nights he has seen the pit glowing with a soft radiance, the intensity of which alternately increases and decreases. The light appears to come from the rocks themselves. This is not the only instance of unexplained lights emanating from the earth. Sometimes they are seen in connection with earthquakes. I do not remember that anything of the kind was recorded at the time of the San Francisco earthquake, but during the Calapalao earthquake, later in the same year (1906), the simultaneous of chain lightning was observed playing along the hillsides. But there were no undercurrents and no atmospheric disturbances to account for the phenomenon. At the time of the great earthquake that was so disastrous in Calabria in September, 1905, the luminous apparitions accompanying the shaking of the ground terrified the people.

Professor Galli thinks that an explanation of these luminous spectacles may be found by supposing them to be due to inflammable gases released from the underlying rocks and soil and ignited by the frictional heat resulting from the vibrations in the crust of the earth. This may truly explain some of the appearances, but not all of them. The "flames" seen are no doubt open to this explanation, but hardly the phosphorescent lights, the fiery columns moving across the landscape, the "slow lightning" or the balls of fire. All of these phenomena suggest the effects of electricity. This, moreover, is the idea entertained by Professor Milne, who thinks that a part of the mechanical energy expended in the grinding together of rocks during an earthquake may produce electrical discharges through friction.

The other strange phenomenon to which I have referred belongs to the realm of acoustics. It consists of unexplained sounds originating no one knows where, whether in the earth or the air. In Italy, where these mysterious sounds have recently been the subject of study by Professor Alipoli of the observatory of Urbino, they are called "brontidi." They have been noticed at different times in all parts of the world. In this country a celebrated example is the "Moodus noises," thus called because they are heard in the town of Moodus, Conn. They were noticed by the earliest settlers and were known to the Indians, who naturally ascribed them to the Great Spirit. Years sometimes pass without their being heard, and then they recommence and continue for months.

These sounds wherever heard are generally grave, heavy, resonant, like the echoes of freight thunder or of a distant explosion. They occur on rainy days, when the heavens are clear and the air serene. It is a popular notion that this presages bad weather, but all attempts to connect them with storms or to trace them to any certain source have failed. They occur with equal frequency in winter and summer. In Italy it has been remarked that they

seem to be confined to mountainous districts and are unknown, for instance, in the plain of Lombardy. On the other hand, they are heard sometimes on the shores of the Low Countries, where they resemble the distant booming of artillery. They have several times been made the subject of scientific research, always without definite result, and now the central meteorological bureau of Italy is to renew the effort by sending out directions to observers who are willing to keep an ear open to these inarticulate but imposing voices that seem to drop from the sky or to come from the bosom of the earth.—Professor Serviss in New York American.

## SOLID GOLD.

The Legal Definition of This Much Abused Term.

The term "solid gold," says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, has been the cause of much discussion on the part of manufacturers of gold articles and of much misapprehension on the part of the public for some time, and the recent law fixing the commercial definition of the phrase is welcomed on all sides.

According to this law, 10 carat gold is the commercial solid gold, and all articles containing more alloy than this or all articles with parts which contain more alloy are henceforth to be known as plated, filled or rolled gold and must be so marked by the manufacturer. For example, a pin with top of solid gold, even to the value of 18 carats, cannot legally be called solid if hinge, hook or pin is not 10 carat gold, while another pin of 10 carats throughout, though of much less intrinsic value than that of 18 carats, is legally "solid gold."

This law was made to protect the manufacturing jewelers against the makers and sellers of "phony" jewelry and has been heartily endorsed by the legitimate trade all over the United States.

"It is a law which we have long needed," said a St. Louis wholesale jeweler, "but solid gold is a misnomer, and I for one should be very glad to see the term abandoned and the value stamp used in its place. Commercially speaking, there never was such a thing as solid gold—at least not for the last 200 or 300 years. Some of the ancient jewelry of the Roman and the Renaissance periods was made of pure gold worked up by hand with the crudest of tools, and that is, of course, of far greater value on account of the purity of the material as well as its quality and beautiful workmanship and its antiquity than any modern products of the goldsmith's art."

"But alloy has been used to a constantly increasing extent since, because jewelers found that the harder the gold was rendered by good alloy the greater its wearing qualities and the more secure, therefore, the setting of the gems it contained. Our jewelry now is of 18, 14 or 10 carats, according to the design and character of the article, and it is much more frequently 10 and 18."

"The law requires us to mark on the article itself or on the card to which it is attached the exact value of the gold in all the parts, just as the food manufacturers are now obliged to state the ingredients of the package on the label, and a heavy penalty is attached to the use of the words 'solid gold' if any part of the article contains less than 10 carats of gold."

"There is a bill to be introduced in congress to abolish the use of this term and substitute the carat stamp for it, and both wholesale and retail jewelers over the country will work hard for its passage. We believe the term is calculated to deceive even when carefully explained. This bill if passed will require manufacturers to stamp all gold articles with the number of carats registered. Half a carat will be allowed for errors, but the manufacturers will have to see that the gold comes within this limit. This

would be a great help to the buying public as well as to the seller, for then every body could see at once what he is getting, and there would not be so many chances for a come back at us."

Patted the King's Head.

King Haakon of Norway has been telling an amusing story about himself illustrative of the democratic way they have of regarding royalty in his kingdom.

Not very long ago his majesty attended the National theater at Christiania, the play for that evening being from the pen of the famous dramatist, Bjornson. So delighted was the king with his evening's entertainment that when the curtain fell he summoned the venerable author to his box.

"A very beautiful play, my dear Bjornson," said the king.

The old man stepped up to King Haakon and patted him kindly on the head.

"Do not say 'malet' (very), your majesty. Here we pronounce it 'meret.' A man in your position must be careful in these matters, you know."

For a moment King Haakon did not know whether or not he should resent the dramatist's familiarity, but the old man's benevolent expression won the day, and the king promised not to mispronounce the word in future.

"That's right," said Bjornson. "You will find my advice sound."

## USED BIBLE AS CIPHER.

A Verse From Solomon Told of a Marriage Engagement.

When she left her home in the small town to come to New York to take up a special course of study her pet sister was fast reaching the crisis of a love affair. The pet sister was a most winsome young lady and had long kept a goodly train of suitors a-sighing.

Was this affair to be the grand affair? The older sister hoped so, for she liked the young man cordially—thought he was just the sort to make a proper brother-in-law.

But the weeks passed, and not a bit of definite news about the progress of the affair did the older sister receive in her city boarding house. She became anxious. Louise, she thought, must not go on recklessly trifling in such important matters.

Then one night about 10 o'clock, just as she was going to bed, came a telegram. The servant brought it up. The older sister was frightened by the pale maids, black inked envelopes, and how ominous it looked! At length she gathered courage to open it. This is what she read:

Solomon six three. LOUISE.

Solomon six three! Whatever in the world! Oh, why, yes, stupid. It of course meant the Song of Solomon, sixth chapter, third verse! But—and her cheeks flushed with shame—she had no Bible!

There was a great scurrying about the boarding house to find a copy of the sacred book. The girls were routed out in vain. On all sides the cry arose, "Who's got a Bible?" Just think of the sister trying to sleep that night without knowing what that verse was! It would have been just like a woman to lie down to pleasant dreams, content to know that she could satisfy her curiosity in the morning—no!

The landlady, good soul, came to the rescue. She was no heathen. She had a Bible. Up to her room with it flew the sister and shut the door. Such a turning over of pages by eager, nervous fingers! Solomon six three. She found it, and then she cried "Hurrah!" and laughed, for the verse was:

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.

—New York Press.

## THE SPECTER SWIMMER.

A Legend of the Sea That Still Appeals to Sailors.

The sailor as a class still holds fast to the superstitions that have been his special heritage throughout all ages. To him the sea is still peopled with phantoms. Men there are still who sail the sea believing in the power of the Swimmer, men who believe in the Walrus of unholy fame and in the existence of the specter bark Lucy to be seen at any time dodging in and out of the rocks and bays of the South Carolina coast. This is the tale of the Swimmer.

Near Cape Finistère there lives a fisher maiden in days when the world asked fewer questions than now, and with her lived her fisher sweetheart. On their wedding night, runs the yarn, smugglers came down on their village, a thieving, drunken band. When they left, having done all the damage they could, the fisher maiden's sweetheart had disappeared, whether with them

or through some other agency. Instead of pining uselessly, as most women, she dressed herself in men's clothes and started to find him dead or alive.

For years she wandered over the earth and ocean, and though her disguise was penetrated several times, and she passed through a host of troubles which vary with each telling, she succeeded in keeping up her hunt. Finally after escaping from an English prison the vessel she was on was lost at sea, and the simple Breton fisher, men enshrined her in a legend which has her forever swimming the seas still in search of the man she loved and hailing each craft she hears.

A sailor, he be Yankee or Portuguese, matter of fact to all things else or grossly superstitious, believes firmly that if you hear the ball of the Swimmer on a dark night at sea and answer it not woe follows swiftly.—New York Herald.

## CLASSIFIED ITS MEANING

To many classified advertising means simply "HELP ADS," securing maids, office boys, etc., and also securing "jobs."

Classified advertising is far more than this. It comprises all classes of wants. It serves the man looking for a horse or a business opening just as well as the man looking for an office assistant.

Did it ever occur to you that by placing your furniture, for which you no longer have use, for sale in the Classified Ad. columns, that you might very readily dispose of it? If not, you are not a Classified reader.

Get acquainted with The Free Press Classified Page. You will find it an index to business opportunities, bargains in horses, vehicles, furniture, and a host of miscellaneous articles in which you are likely to be interested.

## Cent a Word

3 Cents a Word for Free Press Wants Six Consecutive Insertions

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